

CAIB releases its final report

On Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2003, The Columbia Accident Investigation Board (CAIB) presented its final report on the causes of the Feb. 1, 2003, Space Shuttle accident to the White House, Congress and NASA. The report can be viewed at: <http://www.caib.us/news/report/default.html>

The Board made 29 recommendations in the 248-page final report, including 15 return-to-flight recommendations for implementation before the Space Shuttle launches again. The report was the result of a seven-month-long investigation by the CAIB's 13 board members, more than 120 investigators, 400 NASA and contractor employees and more than 25,000 searchers who recovered *Columbia's* debris.

“If this board had set out to spend seven months listing all the good things that NASA does, the report would be thicker than this. Unfortunately, that’s not what our task was. And the nature of these investigations, it causes all of the good work and all of the wonderful things that are accomplished to get lost. And I think it’s worth that we take a second and say that we are impressed by the workforce. We are impressed by the people. And we are impressed by what NASA has accomplished.”

Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr., Columbia Accident Investigation Board Chairman

“On the first of February, we pledged to the families of the Columbia Seven that we would find the problem, fix it and return to the exploration objectives that their loved ones dedicated their lives to. ... As we begin to fulfill the second commitment to the families to fix the problems, our first step must be to accept the findings and to comply with the recommendations. This report should serve as a blueprint, as a road map to that second objective to fix the problems.”

Sean O’Keefe, NASA Administrator

“The JSC team is fully committed to complying with the board’s recommendations and improving the safety of human spaceflight. We are driven in that task by an unshaken deep belief in the value our efforts hold for our nation and the world. I am confident that from these difficult days will come a better future for human spaceflight.”

Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell Jr., Johnson Space Center Director



Chairman of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, retired U.S. Navy Admiral Harold Gehman (right), presented the results of the panel's investigation to NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe.

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Administrator O'Keefe speaks in the main auditorium during his first press conference following the release of the CAIB Report and NASA's Return to Flight efforts. O'Keefe has pledged to return the Space Shuttle to safe flight when the Agency demonstrates it's 'fit to fly.'

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Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell, Jr., Center Director for Johnson Space Center, displays a copy of NASA's Implementation Plan for Return to Flight and Beyond as he speaks to Center employees. To his left is Shuttle Program Manager Bill Parsons and to his right is International Space Station Program Manager Bill Gerstenmaier.

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